

ARTIST STATEMENT:

REMEMBRANCE is a video installation designed to provide the museum visitors a way of expressing their personal feelings and tell their personal stories about how AIDS has affected their lives. Art allows thoughts, feelings and memories to surface so that our deepest concerns can be expressed and acknowledged. Sometimes happiness and peace are achieved, but not always. The process itself is a spiritual teaching, in which the outcome is not manipulated or changed, but rather the creative process allows all of us to experience ourselves and our lives as fully as possible.

REMEMBRANCE: THE TALKING STICK

Oral traditional storytellers in Africa still use the "talking stick" while telling their stories. The stick has spirit living inside of it which brings power to the user. The talking stick is also used at Native American Ceremonies as part of the Council process. The person who is talking holds the talking stick, which helps him/her speak the truth. The talking stick made for this project was made cooperatively by myself and the HIV positive inmates at the California Institution for Men, in Chino, CA. who I worked with for 6 years as the artist in Residence at the prison. My experience with HIV/AIDS has been deeply affected by these men and I wanted them to become part of Remembrance so they would not be forgotten while they are locked up in prison, many of them dying while incarcerated. The leaves that are attached to the stick have the names of some of the men who recently died. The poem was written by an inmate in my art group. The stick comes from my backyard and I burnt words into it which I felt resonated with feelings that come up when talking about AIDS. This talking stick allows the participant to control the camera.

HOW TO USE THE STICK:

The stick is the control for the on and off switch of the camera. When you point it directly at your image, a red light will go on and you know that you are now recording. When you have finished your taping you again point the stick at your face and push the red button, this will make the red light go off as well as turn off the taping.

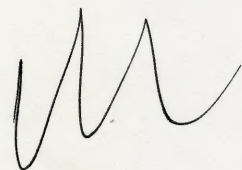
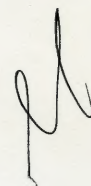
INSTRUCTIONS:

Please ask an explainer to go into the taping booth and help you set up the proper camera height and framing. When this is done the explainer will leave the room.

When you are ready to start take the talking stick and point it at your image on the screen till you see the red button light up on the screen.

When the red button has lighted up you may begin to talk. You may talk for as long as you like (suggested time no more than about 5 minutes). Tell a personal story about how AIDS has affected your life. The more specific you are the better. But please tell whatever you feel is most important to you. When you have finished point the talking stick again to your face and press the red button till you see the red light go off on the screen. When the light is off the camera is no longer taping.

Call in the Explainer again and if it is all right for your tape to be added to the Remembrance collection you will then sign the release form and your tape will become part of the exhibition, playing in the small viewing area adjacent to the taping booth for others to see.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and curves.A second handwritten signature in black ink, appearing as a stylized, cursive mark.

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